

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OES-06 INT-05 EB-07 COME-00 DLOS-06

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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PLOS, PFOR, ENRG, CA

SUBJ: CANADIANS SEEK TO STRENGTHEN CLAIM TO MACHIAS
SEAL ISLAND

1. OTTAWA JOURNAL ON AUGUST 31 PUBLISHED ARTICLE ON MACHIAS
SEAL ISLAND DISPUTE. APPARENTLY HIGH SCHOOL CLASS IN
FREDERICTON, NEW BRUNSWICK IS SEEKING TO PROVOKE RESOLU-
TION OF THE MACHIAS SEAL ISLAND DISPUTE BY LAYING "A TOKEN
MINERAL CLAIM" ON THE ISLAND.

2. ARTICLE POINTS OUT THAT BIG CONCERN OF CANADIANS IS OVER
LOBSTER RIGHTS..."BUT IF THE QUESTION OF SOVEREIGNTY IS
FINALLY BROUGHT TO A HEAD, THE RESULT WILL HAVE FAR MORE IM-
PORTANT CONSEQUENCES FOR OIL AND MINERAL RIGHTS FOR MANY
SQUARE MILES OF SURROUNDING SEABED." CLAIM WAS STAKED ON
JUNE 28 AND FILED WITH NEW BRUNSWICK DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL
RESOURCES. ..."IF THE AMERICANS IGNORE THE MINERAL CLAIM...
THIS WOULD ADD MORE WEIGHT TO CANADA'S CLAIM OF
OWNERSHIP."

3. ARTICLE THEN PROVIDES BACKGROUND INFORMATION
ON HISTORY OF DISPUTE AND REPORTS MAINE-NEW BRUNSWICK
EFFORTS TO CLAIIFY DISPUTE. ACCORDING TO PARTICIPANTS
IN THOSE EFFORTS "...BOTH MAINE AND NEW BRUNSWICK WANT TO
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AVOID THE INTERNATIONAL COURT...." BECAUSE THEY WOULD

NOT BE HEARD THERE. ARTICLE POINTS OUT THAT FIRST FIGHT
WILL BE BETWEEN OTTAWA AND THE PROVINCES.

4. IN CLOSING, BRIAN FLEMMING, ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
SECRETARY TO PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU, IS QUOTED AS SAYING
"THE PLACING OF STAKES....IS NOT AS SIGNIFICANT AS IT APPEARS...
BUT IT COULD SPUR THINGS ON".

5. COMMENT: EMBASSY WONDERS IF DEPARTMENT IS AWARE OF THIS
DEVELOPMENT AND WHETHER IT MIGHT NOT BE WORTH SOME SORT
OF US REACTION EVEN IF EVENT IS OF MINOR SIGNIFICANCE.
DEUMLING

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